

God on the earth then each member ought to contribute by his own subscription to the chief agency of the church, after the holy ministry, in making known its doctrines and polity.

### "RELIGION WITHOUT CHRIST"

A. J. HIXSON

This is the caption of a tract which fell into my hands a few evenings ago. It is attributed to a Doctor of Divinity of St. Louis, Mo. The gist of it is from a discussion among a body of ministers bewailing the spiritual destitution of the churches throughout their city.

In the course of the meeting one of the ministers told of a child who had heard him preach, and was "soundly converted," was taken sick, asked her papa to meet her in heaven and then died. This same preacher attended the little girl's funeral. On the way home her papa said, "There must be something in religion for it made my little girl happy." The father soon after was seized with a fatal sickness and sent for this same minister to visit him. On entering the room he said, "I am awful bad, I feel that I am a great sinner *'what must I do?'*" Here is the old pentecostal question, the question of Philip. Let's hear the answer, "You had better pray." The visits were repeated, also the answer, "Keep on praying." At last, on one of his visits, this father said, "I am going to heaven soon to see my little girl." "Why do you think so?" asked the preacher. "O, last night," he replied, "I was just miserable and I got out of bed and kneeled down and prayed hard and I feel right here (the preacher putting his hand upon his heart) that I am right and will go to heaven when I die."

Such preaching may awaken emotion, may produce an effusion of tears, may in some cases quiet conscience, but will it bring salvation? In all this narrative not a word has been said, not a single allusion made to *faith* or belief in Christ, but simply *pray*, on, *pray hard*. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. 11:6. Not a word was said about Christ or faith. Simply pray. Heathens pray. Devils pray. If we are simply to pray in order to have eternal life I must confess I have read my Bible amiss.

Let us try this "simply pray" doctrine to the teachings of Jesus and the apostles: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever prayeth shall not perish but have eternal life," John 3:16. "He that heareth my word and prayeth to him that sent me, hath everlasting life," John 5:24. Peter did not preach that "to him give all the prophets witness that through his name whosoever prayeth shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:13. Paul did not preach "that by him all that prayeth are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Nor did he preach to the jailer,

"Pray and ye shall be saved." When in all Christ's teachings does he command sinners to pray in order to salvation?

It seems to me the folly of the above teaching is apparent to every one who studies the word of God. And but little more commendable is the *faith* alone than the *pray* alone doctrine. "Even so faith if it hath not works is dead being alone," Jas. 2:17. "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" Jas. 2:20. "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only." Jas. 2:24. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also," Jas. 2:26. Faith that saves rests upon God's word.

Faith that works by love changes the heart, makes it humble, enables it to realize its dependence. And here is when prayer finds a place in the great plan of redemption. We must first "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." "Without faith it is impossible to please him." "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination," Prov. 28:19. "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool," Prov. 28:26.

Let us be Bible Christians, able to give to every man that asketh us a reason for the hope that is in us, able to rebuke in love the counterfeit stuff that is palmed off in the world for genuine religion. Oh, how heart rending to think that after nineteen hundred years of preaching and much of that time reading the Bible, so many professed Christians are not able yet to answer the inquiry, "Men and brethren what must we do," or "What must I do to be saved?"

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### GOOD ANCESTORS

C. H. WETHERBE

The man or woman whose ancestors were morally and religiously good cannot sufficiently estimate his great inheritance. The value of such ancestry is beyond all computation. While it is true that a Christian parent cannot transmit his Christianity to his children, yet he does transmit to them such tendencies as make it much easier for his children to become Christians than it is for those children whose parents and other ancestors were very ungodly and skeptical.

Mr. George Kennan, in an article in *The Outlook* of New York concerning the celebrated Water Street Mission in the days of the noted Jerry McAuley, says: "Of course the drunkards who came to the Water Street Mission were not all rescued, neither were all of the sinners and criminals converted. So far as a year's observation enabled me to judge, the men and women who reformed in Jerry McAuley's prayer meeting were all men and women who had had good mothers, or who at some time in their lives, had been subjected to good influences. I doubt very much whether any hereditary criminal—any man from such a family as that of the Jukes

—who had been conceived in sin and nurtured in vice, ever got on his feet in the Water Street Mission and asked for prayers. Such men doubtless straggled in there occasionally, to see what it was like, but they were not the men who became converts."

There is a vast deal of meaning in that bit of history. There is a bright side to it, and also a very sad and dismal side to it. The bright and blessed side is the fact that the person who has been favored with good ancestors has the utmost reason to thank God and make a wise use of his precious inheritance. It is very much easier for such an one to be temperate and law-abiding than it is for one whose parents and grandparents were habituated to intemperance and lowness of life. O, how sad is the condition of the latter!

In view of what Mr. Kennan states, one is led to ask whether those whose ancestors were thoroughly bad are hopelessly lost. Are they naturally so constituted that they cannot accept Christ and thus become Christians? If so, then it seems cruel that they must be forever lost. They are not nearly as responsible for their moral condition as their parents are. But, really, is it impossible for such ones to be saved? I have been accustomed to believe that Christ is able to save the very worst of sinners, and yet I know that many will not let him save them. Oh, the condition of lost ones is terribly saddening.

### AN AFTERNOON WITH THE FAMOUS "SCOTCH SPURGEON," REV. JOHN McNEIL

ROGER E. DARLING

Yesterday afternoon we had the pleasure of listening to this famous evangelist in the First Presbyterian church in Pittsburg. He talked to men only and every seat in the large church was filled. He has an interesting personality, a strong magnetic power and sways his audience at will. His words come straight from the shoulder. Below we give to the EVANGELIST readers some telling sentences from his sermon.

Subject, "The Need of Being Turned." Text, "I thot on my ways and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep Thy commandments."—Psa. 119:59, 60.

"Note the three stages in the experience of the man in our text: He thot, thot on his own ways. He was a practical thinker, for he turned his feet in the right direction. He was prompt in action, made haste to make this great right about turn. Think, be practical, be prompt."

"Don't be led about by the nose by every Tom, Dick and Harry that wants to lead you. Don't be a dreamer. Be practical. Have done with mere moonshine and sentiment. Settle the question of your salvation practically."

"When a wheel moves, which spoke moves first? Some of you intellectual fellows solve that. They all move at once.

So, when Christ takes hold of a man, all